

*Palm Beach Religious Society of Friends*  
*823 No. A St.*  
*Lake Worth, FL 33460*

Letter of Welcome

Dear Prospective Member,

We welcome you to the Palm Beach Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (also known as Palm Beach Meeting) and thank you for your interest in membership. Having attended regularly for some time, you know that we are a religious organization devoted to individual and corporate searching for the Light in our lives. Part of this experience is found in silent worship together on Sunday morning, quietly listening for God's voice in our midst. To us, this silent worship is the clearest and most direct way to connect with our spiritual core.

In addition, participation in the life of the Meeting involves various activities that are not at all silent: potluck luncheons, work parties, retreats, committee work, and Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. After a period of regular attendance, you are encouraged to join a committee, such as Meeting for Learning, Hospitality, Children's First Day School, Property, or Social Concerns. We invite you to get to know our Meeting to discover the niche where you can best serve.

Enclosed are the following: a discussion of the process of membership and a list of the membership expectations of both an individual and the Meeting.

Again, welcome to our Meeting and if you have any questions, please consult the Clerk or a member of the Care and Counsel Committee.

In Peace and Friendship,  
Ellie Caldwell  
Clerk of the Meeting

## THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A MEMBER

“The promise within Quakerism is that God is knowable by our direct experience, and that when we meet together we can share in that direct and immediate experience.”

Marty Walton  
Clerk, Friends General Conference  
1989

1. People interested in becoming members of The Religious Society of Friends should attend Meeting for Worship for approximately one year, getting to know members of the Meeting and participating in some of the committees and work of the Meeting. In addition, we recommend that when possible, they attend Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business the second First Day of every month.
2. After several months of regular attendance, an attender interested in membership should send a letter requesting membership to the Meeting Clerk or the Clerk of Care and Counsel. This letter should include elements of your spiritual journey, especially those aspects which have brought you to Quakerism.
3. This letter is given to the Care and Counsel Committee, made up of seasoned Friends who are responsible for recommending people for membership. Two members will then be asked to serve as a Clearness Committee to meet with you, in your home if possible, to help you discern whether or not Palm Beach Meeting is the right spiritual home for you. The clearness process may consist of one or more sessions, depending on the sense of clearness shared by all participants.
4. The following month, The Clearness Committee reports back to the Care and Counsel Committee with its recommendation. If it appears clear that you are ready for membership, the Committee brings this recommendation to the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business where your letter is shared with members of the Meeting.
5. Because we consider membership to be a serious step and a two-way commitment, the decision is held over for one month. At the next Meeting for Business, the Care and Counsel Committee asks for approval of its recommendation and you are welcomed into membership.

## WHAT IS ASKED OF YOU AS A MEMBER?

“Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.”  
George Fox, 1656, Balby, England

1. We expect that members will regularly attend Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Business. They need a good knowledge of Palm Beach Meeting in all its aspects.
2. Members are expected to share our sense that all our meetings seek the divine presence that can be experienced together in worship. Friends trust that as we wait together in silence, the Holy Spirit reveals its will for us and brings us into unity. We open ourselves to the truth spoken out of the silence, simply offering our insights, neither pressing our particular views nor withholding in hesitation or shyness.
3. We expect that all members accept that there is “that of God in everyone,” excluding no one, and that faith through love can speak to that spirit within each one.
4. Each new Friend becomes a member of our Quaker family, part of its loving commitment to the welfare of all members, under the discipline of the Meeting, and sharing its responsibilities as well as joys. Palm Beach Meeting members are also members of Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM), which is affiliated with Friends General Conference (FGC) and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC).
5. Each member is expected to carry a share of the expenses of the Meeting by regularly contributing to the Treasury. We do not assess members or assign a tithe, but if you have questions about your financial responsibility, speak with a member of the Care and Counsel Committee. Members are also expected to carry a share of the work of the Meeting by serving on one or more committees wherever they can best serve.
6. Members have a responsibility to be open to the leadings of the Spirit, which may lead them to speak in Meeting for Worship, as well as to listen lovingly and without criticism to the vocal ministry of others.
7. Members are expected to be willing to learn about Quaker queries and advices and to be guided by their principles. In addition, members attempt to uphold the following Quaker testimonies: Integrity, Community, Stewardship of the Earth, Peace, Equality, and Simplicity.

## WHAT IS OFFERED BY THE MEETING?

1. A time and place to worship together
2. An opportunity for spiritual growth
3. Concern for your physical and emotional well-being
4. Support in time of difficulty or suffering
5. Education in the way of Friends
6. Fellowship
7. A place to share concerns, with the hope of support and direction
8. Opportunities to further the work of Friends
9. Representation in wider Quaker organizations and reports on their activities
10. Access to our Meeting library and to materials in all other Quakers libraries in Southeastern Yearly Meeting
11. Facilities for special meetings at the discretion of the Business Meeting
12. Weddings, memorials, and other celebrations under the care of the Meeting

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